



# Home Energy Conservation Act

Progress Report 2017-2019



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The Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) 1995 introduced a new role to local authorities – to prepare a report by the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013 setting out the domestic energy conservation measures that the Authority considers practicable, cost effective and likely to result in significant improvement in the energy efficiency of both Social Housing and Private Sector Housing in the local area

Charnwood Borough Council's first [HECA Report](#) was published in 2013 and set out the initiatives to be delivered over the life of the Report. The subsequent [2015-2017 Progress Report](#) described the changing energy efficiency landscape and how this may impact on carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions going forward.

The Government is committed to tackling fuel poverty whilst making progress towards carbon reduction.

In June 2016, the Government consulted on potential reforms to the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) scheme setting out the high level vision for suppliers' obligations up to 2022.

The Government's response for addressing fuel poverty and the energy efficiency of domestic homes was published in January 2017, with a view to implementing the Regulations as soon as possible.

A reformed obligation has been placed on energy suppliers to improve the energy efficiency of homes which will lead to reduced bills for vulnerable and low income households.

Measures include:

- ECO which requires energy suppliers to make energy efficiency improvements to domestic homes has been extended for a further 18 months from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 to the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2018.
- The Affordable Warmth Obligation continues to focus on fuel poverty by providing help to households receiving benefits to make energy saving improvements to their homes.
- The Carbon Emissions Reduction Obligation (CERO) to insulate solid wall properties with external and internal wall insulation will include a rural sub-obligation to safeguard and maintain delivery in rural areas.
- CERO includes 'hard to treat' cavity wall insulation where it is difficult to access or install a standard insulation.
- A requirement to deliver solid wall insulation to a minimum of 21,000 households.

This Progress Report focuses on Charnwood Borough Council's achievements since the previous Report was published in March 2015, and it sets out the Council's aims for 2017-2019.



The Council's **Corporate Plan 2016-2020** sets out how *“we will make the Borough a better place to live...”* and central to this ambition is the strategic goal to *“ensure every resident matters”*

## Protecting the Environment

Having pledged to *“Take action to protect the environment for future generations and ensure a clean Borough for all to enjoy”*, the Council remains committed to supporting the reduction of domestic carbon emissions.

Through reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, the Council will improve the environment and consequently, the health and wellbeing of all those who live and work in Charnwood, and those who work in or visit Charnwood.

## Every Resident Matters

Moving towards greater domestic energy efficiency may bring a range of benefits to residents, from a cleaner environment with cleaner air, to lower energy bills.



Policy CS16 of Charnwood's Local Plan 2011-2028 encourages the development of sustainable homes that *“reduce the need for energy and secure residual need for energy through low carbon or renewable sources”*. These measures aim to lessen the effects of climate change whilst potentially reducing household energy bills.

Charnwood's Housing Strategy 2015-2019 will be a key delivery mechanism for encouraging housing developers to build new homes to a high standard and that are affordable to households on low incomes.

The Council's Housing Asset Management Strategy 2014-2019 aims to continue to improve the energy efficiency and standard of the Council's housing stock through investment. Our homes are maintained to an enhanced Charnwood Standard to that of the Decent Homes Standard.



Over the past two years, various activities have been undertaken to improve domestic energy efficiency in Charnwood

## Council Homes

Works to improve the energy efficiency of the Council's homes continues and over the past two years we have:

- Updated Energy Performance Certificate records for 438 homes to provide a true Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) rating.
- Invested £60,000 to provide a top up roofing insulation programme during re-roofing works to 158 council homes.
- Brought a further 810 council properties up to the 'Charnwood Standard' during 2015-2016 which has resulted in improved energy efficiency standards for tenants.

## Private Sector Housing

Over the past two years, the Council has taken the following measures to improve domestic energy efficiency in the private sector:

- Distributed 70 energy monitors to provide residents of Charnwood with a greater understanding of their energy usage which may encourage behavioural changes that could lead to reduced energy bills.

- The Private Sector Housing team has completed the National Energy Action refresher training ensuring that the advice and assistance provided is current and residents are signposted to appropriate agencies.
- Publicised and promoted available schemes such as 'Warm Homes, Healthy Homes' in our publications and we will continue to signpost customers to these schemes.
- Included actions in our Climate Local Plan to raise awareness of energy efficiency and the impact of changing climate patterns.

## Raising Awareness

In June 2016, the Council completed Year 2 of 'Green Impact', a National Scheme supporting organisations to improve their environmental performance.

Fifty staff across Charnwood Borough Council worked competitively to complete 150 actions designed to improve energy efficiency. Actions included power audits and switch off audits that aimed to raise awareness promoting behavioural changes both at home and work.

See Appendix 1 detailing the Council's achievements.



This section summarises energy consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions together with fuel poverty and the energy efficiency of homes in Charnwood

## Energy Consumption and Carbon Emissions

The Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy publishes annual estimates of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in all local authority areas.

Between 2011 and 2014, Charnwood has seen the overall levels of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions fall, which is consistent with the majority of local authority areas in England.

| Charnwood CO <sub>2</sub> Emissions |  |  |                                     |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| Year                                | Total Domestic Emissions (kt CO <sub>2</sub> ) | Domestic Emissions per person (tonnes) | Total Emissions per person (tonnes) |
| 2011                                | 318.1  | 1.9                                    | 6.0                                 |
| 2012                                | 344.8  | 2.0                                    | 6.0                                 |
| 2013                                | 335.6  | 2.0                                    | 6.0                                 |
| 2014                                | 280.6  | 1.6                                    | 5.4                                 |

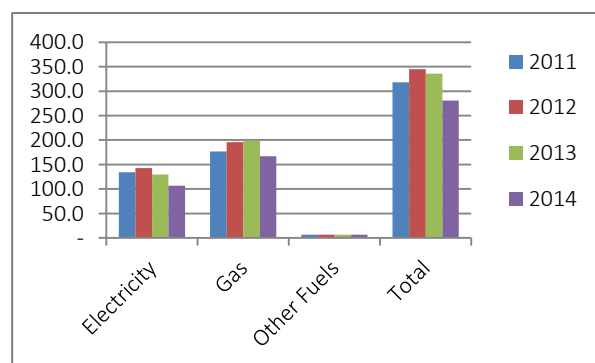
In 2014, Charnwood residents emitted 280.6kt of CO<sub>2</sub>, a reduction of 55kt on the previous year.

## Overall Energy Consumption

Between 2011 and 2013, there has been a surge in energy consumption by Charnwood residents.

By 2014 however, consumption had fallen significantly when compared with the previous year.

Emissions in Charnwood by Energy Type (kt CO<sub>2</sub>)



Domestic consumption of gas remains high in comparison with electricity usage.

In 2014, there was a greater reduction in gas consumption than electricity consumption. The use of other fuels has remained stable between 2011 and 2014.



## Fuel Poverty

Set by the Government, the official poverty line is 60% of the median (or middle) UK median income – in 2015-2016, this was £26,300 (published by the Office of National Statistics).

This means that if a household's income is less than 60% of this median income, that is less than £15,780, the household is considered to be living in poverty.

In England, the Low Income High Costs (LIHC) measure is used to determine whether a household is in fuel poverty. Under this definition a household is considered to be fuel poor where:

- The household fuel costs are above average (the national median level).
- After fuel costs the household income is below the official poverty line (60% of national median income).

Based on the latest data available from the 2014 National Living Cost and Food Survey, the average household fuel costs are £1,354.

## Fuel Poverty Trends

In the East Midlands, fuel poverty has fallen across the region from 13% in 2011 to 10% in 2014 and this trend is consistent across half of the English regions.

## Fuel Poverty by Tenure

Fuel poverty is most common among those living in private rented accommodation whilst owner occupiers experience the lowest levels.

In 2014, around 20% of households renting privately in the East Midlands were considered to be in fuel poverty compared to 7% of owner occupiers.

Whilst both local authorities and registered providers have seen an increase in the number of fuel poor tenants, local authorities have a lower proportion of tenants in fuel poverty overall.

## Fuel Poverty in Charnwood

At the time of the last Census in 2011, there were 69,220 households in Charnwood. The table below shows the split across tenures.

| Charnwood Households by Tenure |                  |                  |                   |
|--------------------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Registered Provider            | Local Authority  | Private Rent     | Owner Occupied    |
| 4%                             | 8%               | 14%              | 74%               |
| 2,769 households               | 5,538 households | 9,690 households | 51,223 households |

The table below provides estimates of the number of households experiencing fuel poverty across tenures in Charnwood.

| Charnwood Households in Fuel Poverty |                 |                  |                  |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Registered Provider                  | Local Authority | Private Rent     | Owner Occupied   |
| 11%                                  | 13%             | 20%              | 7%               |
| 305 households                       | 720 households  | 1,357 households | 3,586 households |

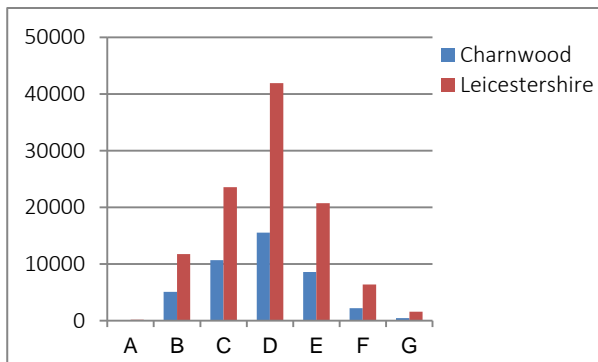
An estimated 5,968 households across Charnwood are considered to be in fuel poverty.



## Energy Performance Certificates

Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) show how energy efficient a building is on a scale of A-G where A is the most efficient and likely to lead to lower fuel bills. EPCs are required for all properties that are for sale or for rent.

The average energy efficiency rating of a domestic property in Charnwood is D, as it is across Leicestershire.



Of all housing tenures, social housing on average has the highest levels of energy efficient properties as both local authorities and registered providers have made substantial investment in recent years towards improving the standard of their housing stock.

Owner occupied housing stock has the greatest potential for delivering carbon savings of all housing tenures.

From April 2018, domestic and non-domestic private landlords will need to ensure that their properties reach an EPC rating of at least E. This requirement will apply to all private rented properties,

including tenanted properties, from April 2020 in the domestic sector.

During 2017-2018, Charnwood will need to consider how to enforce the minimum EPC standard in the private rented sector balanced against the resources available to the Local Authority.





Going forward, a number of actions and initiatives will be delivered over the course of this HECA Progress Report to improve energy efficiency, reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and reduce fuel poverty to improve the health and wellbeing of residents in Charnwood

## Partnership Working

The Council believes that working with our partners helps us to improve outcomes for all residents in Charnwood.

The First Contact Plus scheme refers vulnerable residents, based on a household's needs, for a variety of issues such as poor housing standards, benefits advice and assistive technology to support independent living. Energy efficiency and fuel poverty referrals can be made to appropriate agencies if required.

Additionally, we will endeavour to establish partnerships with energy suppliers, to access resources to improve energy efficiency and reduce fuel poverty in the private sector.

## Council Homes

We will continue to improve the Council's homes working together with our partners.

To improve the energy efficiency of the Council's homes and address fuel poverty over the course of this Action Plan, we will:

- Increase roof insulation levels to meet current requirements.
- Replace 326 heating units.
- Carry out 800 stock condition surveys which will include an energy assessment.
- Update EPC records for the Council's homes to give a true Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) rating.

## Private Sector Homes

The Council will continue to provide information and advice to owner occupiers and private renters, and signpost to appropriate organisations when required.

We will take action to ensure that homes for private rent meet the minimum energy performance requirement – a band E rating on the Energy Performance Certificate.

## Tackling Fuel Poverty

The Government has indicated that from 2018, the focus will shift from energy efficiency to fuel poverty.

The Council's Financial Inclusion Officers will continue to support tenants to ensure that they are on suitable energy tariffs.

See Appendix 2 for more information on the Council's actions for 2017-2019.



| heca action plan progress 2015-2017 |   |  |            |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|------------|
|                                     | ACTION  | PROGRESS UPDATE & OUTCOMES   | COMPLETED  |
| 1.                                  | Encourage residents to adopt energy efficiency measures by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signposting to relevant service, e.g. the Energy Saving Trust</li> <li>• Signposting to information on Government schemes, e.g. Feed in Tariffs and ECO</li> </ul> | Charnwood has seen domestic CO <sub>2</sub> emissions reduce significantly from 335.6kt in 2013 to 280.6kt in 2014<br>The Private Sector Housing team has continued to signpost customers to relevant services and information, for example, the Energy Saving Trust | March 2017 |
| 2.                                  | Implement an environmental behaviour change programme [at home and work] at Charnwood Borough Council through the 'Green Impact' accreditation scheme   | 7 teams comprising 50 staff completed 150 actions to improve energy efficiency<br>Actions included power audits and switch off audits aimed at raising awareness and which may lead to behavioural changes at home and work  | March 2017 |
| 3.                                  | Provide free energy monitors to local households  | 70 energy monitors distributed to Charnwood residents<br>A greater understanding of energy usage may encourage behavioural changes that could lead to reduced energy bills   | March 2017 |
| 4.                                  | Promote 'Warm Homes, Healthy Homes' scheme to Council staff   | 'Warm Homes, Healthy Homes' article published in One Charnwood   | March 2017 |
| 5.                                  | Signpost 'Warm Homes, Healthy Homes' scheme for customers seeking advice and assistance   | 89 referrals were made to the 'Warm Homes, Healthy Homes' scheme in 2015-2016 and 42 referrals during 2016-2017 (April-September)  | March 2017 |
| 6.                                  | Provide a top up roof insulation programme and explore available grants for tenants currently in fuel poverty   | £60,000 invested on roofing insulation for 158 homes as part of our re-roofing programme   | March 2017 |
| 7.                                  | Carry out stock condition surveys to aid in planning the required budget to maintain the Council's housing stock over the next 30 years   | Stock condition database updated with 438 surveys  | March 2017 |
| 8.                                  | Implement and maintain the 'Charnwood Standard' when the new capital works partner is established   | 810 Council Homes were brought up to the Charnwood Standard during 2015-2016 (2016-2017 figure will be confirmed in May 2017)  | March 2017 |



| heca action plan 2017-2019 |  |  |   |            |
|----------------------------|--|--|---|------------|
|                            | ACTION   | LEAD OFFICER                                       | OUTCOMES  | DELIVER BY |
| 1.                         | Run a series of features in our publications (One Charnwood and Charnwood News) relating to energy efficiency and fuel poverty | Private Sector Housing Manager                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To raise residents' awareness of energy efficiency measures and to encourage residents to take measures to improve the energy efficiency of their homes</li> </ul> | March 2019 |
| 2.                         | Promote fuel switching to residents  | Private Sector Housing Manager                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To encourage residents to consider fuel switching which may reduce fuel poverty</li> </ul>   | March 2019 |
| 3.                         | Continue to signpost/refer residents to appropriate available schemes for improved energy efficiency and reducing fuel poverty | Private Sector Housing Manager                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure residents are maximising their income</li> <li>To encourage behavioural changes which may lead to reduced fuel poverty</li> </ul>                        | Ongoing    |
| 4.                         | Raise awareness of minimum energy efficiency standards required by 2018 for private rented properties                          | Private Sector Housing Manager                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure all private rented properties in Charnwood meet the minimum energy efficiency standard by March 2018</li> </ul>  | March 2018 |
| 5.                         | Enforce minimum energy performance rating of E on an EPC in respect of new lets and renewals                                   | Private Sector Housing Manager                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To improve the energy efficiency of private rented accommodation in Charnwood</li> </ul>   | Ongoing    |
| 6.                         | Require private landlords to rectify excess cold hazards for all private rented accommodation that we become aware of          | Private Sector Housing Manager                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure that private landlords remove excess cold hazards in their rental properties</li> </ul>  | Ongoing    |
| 7.                         | Develop a Fuel Poverty Strategy for Charnwood  | Private Sector Housing Manager                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure that fuel poverty is tackled for residents across all tenures in Charnwood</li> </ul>  | March 2019 |
| 8.                         | Update EPC records for 800 Council homes   | Principal Officer, Investment & Programme Delivery | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure Council homes meet the minimum EPC standard</li> <li>To provide a true Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) rating</li> </ul>                             | March 2019 |



## heca action plan 2017-2019 continued

|     | ACTION   | LEAD OFFICER  | OUTCOMES   | DELIVER BY |
|-----|--|---|--|------------|
| 9.  | Invest £80,000 in a top up roofing insulation programme for 200 properties and explore the available grants for tenants currently in fuel poverty                        | Principal Officer,<br>Investment & Programme Delivery | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To improve the energy efficiency of Council homes</li> </ul>  | March 2019 |
| 10. | Carry out 800 stock condition surveys (including energy assessments)   | Principal Officer,<br>Investment & Programme Delivery | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To aid with planning the maintenance of the Council's housing stock</li> </ul>  | March 2019 |
| 11. | Explore the opportunities for working in partnership with other agencies to reduce fuel poverty in the private sector  | Private Sector Housing Manager                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To develop partnerships with other agencies to work together to reduce fuel poverty in Charnwood</li> </ul>                   | March 2019 |
| 12. | Implement an environmental behaviour change programme at the Council during 2017-2018 through the 'Green Impact' accreditation scheme to effect changes at home and work | Sustainability Officer                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To raise awareness amongst the 5 staff teams taking part which may lead to behavioural changes at home and at work</li> </ul> | March 2018 |
| 13. | Where any future bids for funding have been successful, the Action Plan will be updated to reflect the outcomes of these resources                                       | Private Sector Housing Manager                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To improve the energy efficiency of the private sector housing stock across Charnwood</li> </ul>                              | N/a        |



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